

BIOGRAPHY OF MR. R. RINTOUL.

The article which appears in the *Illustrated* of the 2nd inst. is a most interesting and valuable contribution to the knowledge of the life and career of the late Mr. Rintoul. It is a most interesting and valuable contribution to the knowledge of the life and career of the late Mr. Rintoul. It is a most interesting and valuable contribution to the knowledge of the life and career of the late Mr. Rintoul.

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actually wrote the whole contents of a number of his journals. Such conscientious efforts to excel were rewarded by the rapid extension of the circulation of the *Advertiser* and its growth in popularity.

Rintoul was favourably circumstanced for obtaining the materials which might contribute to the substantial, as well as the formal improvement of the journal entrusted to his care. The great number of burarsies in the University of St. Andrew's (in comparison with the number of students), has at all times induced a larger proportion of the young men of the immediately adjoining counties to resort to it than is usually the case in Scotland. The district clergy too, from maintaining a more than usual intimacy with the *Alma Mater* in after-life, used to keep alive more of their literary tastes than was common with the class elsewhere. The burgh schools of Dundee were even at the commencement of Rintoul's career of a superior character, and the more intelligent of its townsmen were earnestly and successfully labouring to improve them. He was at once fond of intellectual pursuits, and fond of society—in which his natural sagacity and an original vein of humour made him highly popular; and he was thus enabled to gather round him a circle of attached friends well qualified to lend him literary advice and assistance. Among his occasional contributors—as early as 1813—was Thomas Chalmers, who was already emerging from the obscurity of a country parson. Chalmers was then at the turning-point of his career. At an early period his aspirations had been towards intellectual culture. The devotion of part of his life to a now in a state of rapid development, and the "religious public" was eagerly welcoming a distinguished convert. In this transition stage he had not learned to adjust so successfully as he afterwards did his intellectual aspirations, and his practical investigations into the natural laws of social economy with a predominant devotion to turn of mind. After earnest efforts to accommodate himself to the conventional tone of the religious circles, into which he was afterwards to inspire a higher spirit, he would at times seek relief in the conversation of his older associates, and Rintoul was often resorted to for that purpose. In their walks in the environs of Dundee the views developed in Chalmers' "Stability of National Resources" were often canvassed between them. And Rintoul was even then one of those who repaid the communication of a new idea by reproducing it in a modified form and suggesting its association with other trains of thought. Besides Chalmers he was in habits of familiar intercourse with Duncan and Fleming, names honourably known in Scotch science, and with many cultivated intellects who have passed away and left no name behind them.

Aided and encouraged by such auxiliaries the *Advertiser* took a prominent part in advocating educational improvement. Although not a religious journal, its columns were always open to communications from the friends of missions, and the assertions of pure administration in Church and State. The active part taken by the principal proprietors of the *Advertiser* in burgh politics brought Rintoul into intimate relations with another class; men fond of it might be of a somewhat rude sociality, but who in their business pursuits had developed a robust sagacity. In combination with these men he made his paper a formidable assailant of the corrupt proceedings of the close corporation of the town. The increasing wealth and population of Dundee called for public works, the importance of which their local rulers were incapable of comprehending. The occupations of the counting-house required a better educated class of young men than the defective established schools of the district could supply. From 1813 to 1822 was a busy and exciting period of Rintoul's life, agitating for the improvement of the burgh schools, the extension of the harbour accommodation, the exposure of the local fiscal mismanagement, controversies respecting the best modes of pauper relief, &c. &c. He was thus unconsciously training himself for public discussion on a wider field.

The local influence obtained by the *Dundee Advertiser* attracted the attention of the Whig leaders in the district to the paper and its editor. A friendly intercourse had always been maintained between Mr. Ramsay Maule and the Reformers of the Forfarshire burghs. Rintoul's intelligence, and a certain ray originality in his conversation, rendered him an especial favourite at Panmure House. There in the year 1818 he first met with Joseph Hume. It was at a great dinner given for the purpose of introducing the future financial reformer to the notabilities of Dundee and the other burghs. One remark which fell from Mr. Hume in the course of the evening left a deep impression upon Rintoul, for we have frequently heard him advert to it. Sir Francis Burdett was then at the zenith of his popularity, and some of the guests were loud in their praises of him. Hume listened at first with indifference; then with slight symptoms of impatience; and finally broke out with, "He talks well, but what has he done?" The rest of the company, it would appear, were rather startled by such a heretical doubt of the political value of their first idol; but Rintoul sympathised from the first with the declaration in favour of the real work. The "do something" creed, however, soon became the political creed of the district. Subsequent to the election of the district were calculated to accelerate the diffusion of sentiment and opinions hostile to the then existing system of government, followed each other in rapid succession. The death of George the Third, the Manchester disturbances, the trial of the Queen, everything conspired to augment the numbers and increase the confidence of the Opposition. A series of annual dinners at Edinburgh, at which Macintosh and other distinguished members of the Whig party attended, were resorted to from all parts of Scotland. The Dundee Reformers were not absent, though they sympathised more with the advanced opinions of the Westminster liberals than with the eclectic and cautious policy of the *Edinburgh Review*. Douglas Kinnaird, the friend of Byron and Hobhouse, was connected with Forfarshire; and Joseph Hume already avowed the principles of dissemination which the *Westminster Review* was subsequently founded. A comparative lull in political excitement prevailed for some years after the death of Lord Castlereagh, but it was only the prelude to fiercer contests. The Cabinet had even before that event become conscious that concessions must be made to the advancing spirit of the age. A weekly newspaper, the *Guardian*, was actually established by Government money in London, about 1820, for the purpose of writing up the principles of the Holland House Whigs and the persons of the Liverpool Ministry. The object was to prepare the Tory party for acquiescence in liberal measures. This extraordinary stroke of *Anglo* was destined from soon after the Queen's arrival in England; the Government subvention was effected enough to render possible the subsequent coalition of the Canningite Tories and the Holland House Whigs. During the adminis-

tration of Mr. Canning and the brief feeble Cabinets which succeeded him, the "educational" radicalism—as it had now become the fashion to call the disciples of Bentham and James Mill—had not been idle. Though not numerous they were an active party; their leaders were men of clear views and great energy; their headquarters were in the back shop of Francis Place at Charing Cross, but the bookelling agency of the *Westminster Review* was a most efficient missionary organisation throughout the Kingdom. But before these diversified influences had been fully brought into play, Rintoul had been removed from a provincial to a metropolitan sphere of action.

About the year 1825 he terminated his connection with the *Dundee Advertiser*. The reasons for his taking this step have no interest for the public. He first attempted to establish a newspaper at Leith; but that experiment was soon given up. He then accepted the editorship of the London *Atlas* which had recently been started. This engagement was brought about by the mediation of Douglas Kinnaird, who had had ample opportunities of observing the ability of Rintoul as an editor, and his skill and energy as a partisan. The recommendations of Kinnaird and Hume were excellent passports to the circles of independent literary politicians in London; but Rintoul's first care was to collect around him an efficient literary staff. The co-operation of Francis, Forbush, Southern, and also of able critics and departments of music and the fine arts, was secured; and everything promised a long and prosperous career for the *Atlas*. But difficulties arose between the editor and the proprietors. The engagement was rescinded. A fund was raised for the establishment of a weekly newspaper by subscriptions of a few friends and connections of Rintoul. His literary conjugal, for the most part, stood true to him. He was invested with absolute power as editor; and on the 5th of July 1828, the first number of the *Spectator* was published. His history from that day to the day of his death was the history of this journal.

He was now free to experiment in the art of compiling a newspaper as unrestrictedly as when he first became editor of the *Dundee Advertiser*. His ambition to produce a perfect paper was as great; personal intercourse with men who occupied distinguished positions in the literary and political circles, had expanded his mind; and the lapse of three lustres had somewhat abated the headlong impetuosity of youth. He had naturally a propensity to examine every question from all points of view. He was anxious to free his mind from all prepossessions that might obscure the truth. The fusion, or confusion of parties, at the time the *Spectator* was started, predisposed the general public to support a journal conducted in this unpartisan spirit. The coalition of Whigs and Tories under Canning had effaced the dividing line of parties, and the preference evinced by Parliament or the public for one minister over another was dictated by personal rather than political considerations. Measures more than men were the prevalent subjects of discussion, and liberal conservatives and practical reformers were alike disposed to entertain measures by which administrative government might be improved. The *Spectator* professed to be "a family newspaper," to record every event of social or political importance, to devote particular attention to literature, popular science, and the fine arts, and to be independent of all party connections. The matured skill of the editor, and his care to engage able assistants, were rewarded by a decided success, and his path was at first open and free from thorns. The emancipation of the Catholics—the first question of moment that occurred—was easily dealt with. Peel's wise determination to prevent a civil war by doing justice to the Romanists, met with the approbation of every candid and dispassionate mind. But the vindictive rage of the bigots who opposed Emancipation prompted them to raise the question of Parliamentary Reform, by way of retaliation. They vainly imagined that the pulpit was as intolerant as themselves, and that an extension of popular influence in Parliamentary elections would enable them to re-establish sectarian principles of government. The Tory Marquis of Blandford was the first to propose a measure of Parliamentary Reform. The question being thus raised the real Parliamentary Reformers were not slow to enter the field, and more than one plan of reform was brought forward as an amendment upon that of the Marquis of Blandford. Still the question was dispassionately and even languidly discussed. But an unexpected impulse was given to the movement from without. The expulsion of the d'Orleans from the Barriades excited a strong and far from hostile sensation throughout England. The self-congratulation and humanity of the successful surgeons were the theme of universal praise. Meetings were held in many districts to congratulate the French people on their recovered liberties, in which men of all shades of opinion took part. These meetings had no reference to English politics, but an emulative spirit naturally took possession of the public mind, and increased the desire to follow the lead of France and obtain for the people a preponderant voice in the branch of the Legislature which was said to represent them. The party averse to constitutional change saw, when too late, the mistake it had committed. The onward march of Reform could no longer be arrested. The Wellington Ministry opposed itself to the movement, and for its needs was beaten down and marched over. A new Ministry was installed in office with Parliamentary Reform for its programme. Of these events Rintoul had been an observant and deeply interested watcher. He was a reformer both by conviction and sentiment. He was no party-man, but here was a national not a party movement. The sympathies of all his most valued political advisers were with the Reform movement. After mature and dispassionate reflection, he came to the conclusion that, as a journalist, it was his duty to throw himself into the scale of reform. From this conclusion some of his own connections who had aided in the establishment of the *Spectator* dissented. This did not cause a moment's hesitation on his part. Arrangements were made for buying up his interest in the concern, and the *Spectator* proclaimed for Reform. Rintoul's professional adherence to the cause. When Earl Grey's bill was brought forward, he, after an impartial scrutiny, came to the conclusion that it was adequate, and the *Spectator* was the first to raise the cry, "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." The phrase took the popular fancy, and contributed greatly to prevent the interposing of obstructions from self-willed and crochety individuals. But even in the heat of the Reform Bill struggle Rintoul did not forget that the bill was merely the means to the attainment of an end. He had not forgotten Hume's pregnant words about doing more valuable than saying. He sought Parliamentary Reform because he believed it would facilitate the attainment of legislative and ad-

ministrative reforms. And with this view the first series of *Spectator* Supplements was published, directing attention to those reforms in the financial, war, and other departments of Government, to which a reformed Parliament ought, without loss of time, to direct its attention. In publishing these supplements, Rintoul took up the ground which more than twenty years after the "Administrative Reformers" attempted to take up, but without success. "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," carried the day; but the legislative and administrative reforms recommended by the originator of that cry were indefinitely postponed.

The period immediately succeeding the passing of Lord Grey's Reform Bill was a barren and disappointing era. The first general election under the new law gave an enormous majority to Ministers in the House of Commons. Ministers were startled by the immense load of responsibility thus thrown upon them; none of them were prepared to adopt a bold course, and the more timid were already looking back to an alliance with the Conservatives. Their want of decision excited vague discontent, especially in Ireland, and under the pressure of the aristocratic section of the Cabinet a Coercion Bill for that country was introduced. Lord Durham, Mr. Abercromby, and other influential Whigs, remonstrated against this adoption of a Tory policy, but the temporising policy of Brougham and the will of Stanley prevailed. These internal dissensions came to an outbreak at the entertainments given to Lord Grey in Edinburgh, and Lord Durham in Glasgow. In this unhappy controversy the *Spectator* zealously advocated what came to be called the Durham policy—the completion of the work of Reform by extending the suffrage, shortening the duration of Parliaments, and the adoption of secret voting. These inherent dissensions led to the first abortive attempt of the Conservatives to snatch the reins of government, and to the brief interregnum of Sir Robert Peel, followed by the establishment of the Melbourne Government in consequence of the Litchfield House compact. To this result the advanced reformers with whom Rintoul co-operated had mainly contributed; but their hopes were disappointed. Under the Melbourne, as under the Grey Cabinet, inordinate counsels prevailed.

It was now known to Rintoul that the popular movement which had carried the Reform Bill had spent its force. He grew weary of the aimless contests of the so-called Reformers and Conservatives. He reverted to the policy upon which he had acted along with Hume and the other "educated radicals" before the Reform agitation commenced. He redoubled his exertions to make this journal a truthful and attractive record of all social movements, and of all that was accomplished in art, science, or literature. And he set himself to promote social and civil reforms irrespective of party. Mr. Grote's labours for the adoption of vote by ballot, and Mr. Rowland Hill's original and efficacious plan of Post-office reform, were able and effectively advocated by the *Spectator*. But for many years a prominent feature in this journal was the discussion of questions connected with Colonial policy.

It has been intimated above that the principles of economical science were a favourite theme of discussion with Chalmers and Rintoul before the former left Kilmarly for Glasgow. One point upon which they agreed was, that Adam Smith's enumeration

—The Bee

A CITIZEN.

himself committed a greater mistake, by stating

the low-arched and the bulky Norman styles of architecture, whose snuffy brickwork is only kept together

now I feel disposed to tilt against it on more

3000 acres: Lot 13, 51 acres; lot 14, 68 acres & roads;
acres; lot 16, 48 acres; lot 17, 47 acres; lot 18, 45 acres

30 acres; lot 31, 48 acres; lot 32, 44 acres; lot 33

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in
all kinds of
Clothing, Hats, Shoes, Suits, etc.
J. A. McCABE, Queen's-p'ce,
opposite Church-hill.

acres; lot of those who perished in the ill-fated ship

BOOKS and Stationery selling off cheap
Target, between Levey's and Wildg

all proprietary interest in the ERF

YAMLINE, SLOMAN, and CO.
Furnishing and General Iron-
mongers, 280, George-street.—Bar, sheet, and
blister steel, iron yard, &c.

newspaper.

Wholesale and Retail
Longera, 416 and 418,
iron; spring, cast
pg-street.

the ditto, 30 feet-
 -ing Holden-street, each 30 feet, by depths
 g to 113 feet.
 n course of preparation, and will be exhibited
 when completed.

